

The Sahûl Chronicle

Turn 5

1471–1475 SA

The living are governed by the dead.

(Volpel Zhogian)

This Turn, climate change becomes a reality. Winters continued to lengthen, culminating in 1474: the “Year Without a Summer”. During that fateful year, there was snow on the ground in mid-summer as far north as Cappargarnia, and starvation stalked the central and eastern portions of Sahûl as the magnitude of the crop failures quickly exceeded all possible stores. Fortunately, the next year was better, at least in the east. Southern and central Sahûl continue in the icy grip of Winter...

GP, AP, and NFP production are affected as indicated on your stat sheets. Not every Realm is affected, and not all those affected are affected equally. These effects are variable and temporary.

In addition, all Regions made as *Famine* produce no Regional GP. Each Turn a Region is in Famine, its Resistance Level increases by one or more points. At higher Resistance Levels, Regions may riot or rebel. Regardless of Resistance, if famine continues too long, the population will attempt to leave and find greener pastures. Towns and cities in Famine Regions are subject to population loss.

QUOTE: Last Turn’s quote was from Garry Trudeau, though I would have accepted an attribution to Mao Zedong. No one got it, so whosoever guesses the source of this Turn’s quote will receive 2HC.

SPECIAL THANKS: to Cort Winters for the illustration on page 80. It’s fantastic!

NEXT TURN DUE: FRIDAY, 13 JUNE 2008.

FREE COMPANIES & ERRANTRY &C.

WHITE LOTUS COMPANY—10hi 24mi 20li
Captain: Mistress Exata (L993I) IL age 29
Location: Jorun, Drammul Province
Min. Bid: 35gp/Turn

COMPANY OF THE BLACK CLAW—3sc 25hi 15mc
Captain: Tirabinis Arantes (L995W) YG age 53
Location: Tichuir, Iantier Province
Min. Bid: 25gp/Turn

RED DRAGON COMPANY—10cv 15pk 30mi HIRED
Captain: Tarrid the Fiercer (LA69S) UR age 30
Location: Somewhere in Ingazi
Min. Bid: 30gp/Turn, will not fight Urdans

KNIGHTS OF ST JARRAD—5hc 25mc 8lc HIRED
Captain: Sir Balorri Withini (L976W) TR 57
Location: Cappargarnia

TRANG’S FLEET FOR HIRE—3cr 25wr 20tr 10mr
Commodore: “Mild” Trang (LA94W) YG age 48
Location: Imperial Free City of Sarsis
Min. Bid: 45gp/Turn

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

IMPERIAL BANK OF EINANDHU
Location: Einandhu
Available to borrow:..... 1300 GP
(no single borrower may borrow more than 700 GP)

Investors may purchase shares at the Imperial Free City of Einandhu on the Upper Byrrin for 200 GP each, all profits to be divided by shares. Rule 10.5.2 investment income accrues normally; check your stat sheets. The four chief shareholders, together with the Tiger King of Arms (the leader of the Heralds), form the bank’s board of directors (indicated * below).

Shares:

House Gwariva of Ingazi 2*
House Pangku of Araxes..... 3*
House Sakkath of Zarkhandu 2*
Ancient and Undaunted Order of Heralds 3*
Guilds Council of Adndar 2*
Printers Guild of Zadres 1

BANK OF ITAXIK
Location: Itaxik
Available to borrow:..... 1000 GP


Western Sahul

 THE KIT'IXI COAST

COUNTY OF TOKATL (12 I/TA)

Her Excellency, Tinikatua IV, Mistress of the Totek Hive, Countess of Tokatl.

Trade: Averon, Chi'tixi, CM, Kachar, Taneki

DP: None

Tinikatua IV amazed her advisers by living to a crabby old age. The usual investments had the usual results. To celebrate her upcoming fortieth birthday (in 1476), the holy city of Tz'a'aktes was spiffed up and expanded. It should be quite a party.

DUCHY OF TANEKI (13 I/YG)

Her Grace, Toktoka III, Mistress of Aketl, Duchess of Taneki, Baroness Ketatl.

Trade: Averon, Chi'tixi, Itaxik, Kachar, Pexiki, Tokatl

DP: None

Taneki expanded their Naval Academy, even as in the south their Equerries began their final push against the Xinite heretics.

In 1473 the distinguished and venerable Marshal Chitor led the might of Yagnarist Taneki against the very core of the Xinite heresy in Teutan. Before the ossuary gates of the Cathedral of Xincalli, battle was joined. Chitor commanded 50,000 Equerries and auxiliaries against a rabble of perhaps 10,000. Though the heretics made good use of the local hive forts and inflicted some serious casualties, the end was never in doubt. The Xinites were forced to retreat to Xincalli, where Chitor finished them off with a firebolt in the sanctuary and a glorious charge. The Xinite army, their leadership, and their cathedral were all destroyed.

Marshal Chitor, now of advanced age, did not long survive the war for which she had given so much. In 1474 the great hero of the Second Xinite War was laid to rest with full military honours in the vast field in front of the ruins of Xincalli where once the heretical holy troops had marshalled. It took almost a week to hack a tomb out of the icy ground.

Uxanib was colonized, and many of the remaining Xinites there embraced orthodoxy.

THE CHURCH MILITANT (13 I/IL)

Her Holiness Aketika VII, Iluvarian Matriarch of the West, Archemandrite of Tikata.

Trade: Araxes, Averon, Tokatl

DP: None

The Church invested heavily for the future. It hasn't really paid off so far.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF AVERON (21 SI/IL)
Her Gracious Majesty, Jera III, Lady of Clan Drax, Countess of Darida, Lord Admiral of the Green, Electoral Grand Duchess of Averon.

Tiketua II of Tishrak, Margrave of the North.

Trade: Araxes, Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, CM, Taneki, Tokatl

DP: Dorria (A), Verris (T), Enrid (see below), Nottesan (see below), Jorun (A, and see below), Sandir (T)

The wildly popular Grand Duchess Jera continued her father's missionary efforts in the Urdan deserts to the east. With determination and persuasive rhetoric, Iluvarian missionaries converted a handful of frontier regions: Jalid, Sish, Selid, and Kib. The Urdans there were of the cultural, rather than religious, variety, and at least one tribe in Selid expressed some confusion even about the name of the goddess they ostensibly worshipped. Similar efforts in Pantun were frustrated by a surprising and violent resistance to the very *idea* of Iluvar. The missionaries sent there were returned in their hats as a sort of chopped-up soup base, postage due, with a short note addressed to the Grand Duchess that simply read, "Golthoth be damned".

Diplomats scoured the east, with generally favourable results, though there were a couple of hiccups that quickly evolved into a diplomatic war with the Duchy of Thace. In Enrid, Urdan missionaries from the Thacian Duchy convinced the locals that, after a fair trial, Iluvarianism wasn't really working for them. Add to that a diplomatic run-in with the visiting Thacian heir, the brilliant young Lord Willor, and you've got a recipe for

failure. In a blow to Averon's pride (if not prestige), the region joined Ducal Thace, instead.

In Nottesan, initial diplomatic success with the (quite fervent) Iluvarians there was undone, again by Lord Willor, who convinced the Nottesan to maintain their independence.

Similar diplomatic victories were secured in Sandir (where Averon benefitted from a gaffe by the Thacian diplomat), and in Jorun, where the situation was exacerbated by the White Lotus Company... (Please see *Duchy of Thace*)

The youngsters returning from the foreign missions* have proved a great asset to the Church, strong in their orthodoxy and invigorating to the hidebound Averse hierarchy.

A Priory was built in Tueteen, as were roads from Adres to Graidir and Teumeda to Tueteen.

Pressure is building on the Grand Duchess to marry, and there are no lack of suitors.

COUNTY OF PEXIKI (18 I/YG)

Her Excellency, Ixix III, Mistress of the Coactoka Hive, Countess of Pexiki, Lady Amoxcali.

Trade: Itaxik, Kachar, Taneki

DP: None

The Pexiki consolidated their realm in the aftermath of the victory over the Xinite heretics. Fresh new colonists settled in Ocut and Sahmi. Pexiki's cavalry improved markedly. Pexiki weathered the Winter snows.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF ITAXIK (27 I/UR)

Her Gracious Majesty, Chass'ika I, Mistress of the Tis'chak, Countess of Takkikik, Electoral Grand Duchess of Itaxik, Golden Beetle of the West.

Trade: Kachar, Pexiki, Sakkar, Taneki, Yax'te

DP: None

The Grand Duchess, inspired by the Heralds, endowed her own bank in the city of Itaxik in 1476. She also ordered the construction of a bridge across the Xos between Molko and Akshoya. Itaxik donated piles of surplus supplies to the Church.

The weather was fairly awful, and snow that fell during the autumn of 1473 did not melt until the summer of 1475. There was some starvation,

* Other than those sent to Pantun, obviously.

particularly in the inland areas of the Grand Duchy, but 1475 proved a year of good crops, so all was not lost.

COUNTY OF KACHAR (15 I/UR)

Her Excellency, Kassa IV, the Shrewd, Mistress of Calpolli, Lady Tchantli, Countess of Kachar, Protector of the Fair Isles.

Trade: Itaxik, Sakkar, Taneki, Tokatl, Yax'te

DP: None

Urdan missionaries flooded Xinite Cauatl, converting the region. Investments were made into public works, and the Naval Academy expanded. Ice fishing has become very popular.

BARONY OF SAKKAR (10 IS/IL)

Baroness Neallatalah II of Sakkar, Mistress of Nelhuayotl, Heir of the Prophet, Beloved of the Light of Iluvar.

Trade: Itaxik, Kachar, Yax'te

DP: None

The frugal and pious Sakkar built more ships, and then improved the ones they had. They also continued to exercise their tough little navy. Due to a lack of raw materials, unemployment is endemic throughout Sakkar. It might have been worse, had so many not starved in 1474.

ICEMARK OF YAX'TE (12 S/IL)

Margrave Tillein the Silent, Grand Master and Knight-Commander of the Champions of the Renewal.

Trade: Itaxik, Kachar, Sakkar

DP: Kikua (T), Narmona (T)

The Yax'te had themselves a hard, hard winter from about mid-1473 until the joyous snow melt summer of 1475. Regions south of the Choloa River remain under famine conditions, though the forest regions were less affected. Tillein has entirely ceased to whistle.

Seeking friends in the north, Tillein's heir (Tillein the Loquacious) and a few others headed up into the Urdan lands. Results were mixed.

A colony was placed in the forests of Soren. The colonists struggle to survive, and the future of their colony is not yet assured.

Thacia and Aret
HIGH PLAINS & NORTHERN COAST

ELECTORAL QUEENDOM OF THE GREAT HIVE OF
CHI'TIXI TIRRIX KI (30 I/YG)

Her Most Puissant Majesty, Antaxi IV, Mistress of Tirrix & the Great Hive, Duchess of Chax and Tix'itikata, Countess Itax, Electoral Queen of Chi'tixi, &c., &c.

Her Excellency, Tannix III, Lady Ch'tort, Countess of Cærrat, Vice-regent of Western Chi'tixi.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Atuburrk, Averon,
Cappargarnia, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi,
Kicitchat, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE,
Tokatl, Urdraháhn

DP: Cærrat (see below), Erekat (T), Matikat (T)

Antaxi sent diplomats with large piles of cash to bucolic Cærrat, and the Countess accordingly pledged her fealty to Chi'tixi as a dependency. She brings with her the Prefectures of Birrat, Adlír, Emananadar, and Endekkar, as well as a handful of troops and a new capital town, Tantor.

Queen Antaxi returned to the capital to supervise the reconstruction of her realm. A thorough investigation was conducted into the death of Queen Xant'ki VIII, although the results are as yet a closely guarded secret. Full employment was nearly achieved.

DUCHY OF THACE (16 S/UR)

His Grace, Biard XIV, Lord Goshtikka-Ourane, Baron of Brennadein, Duke of Thace.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Averon, Chi'tixi, Ingazi,
Hyarágec, Kicitchat, ThaceE, Urdraháhn

DP: Shustanim (F), Gaslar (F), Enrid (T)

Duke Biard and young Lord Willor continued to focus on the west, and what they considered the Averese encroachment on Urdan lands. The border towns of Herrûnd and Attenöe were built in Ensar and Sishand respectively. Three priories were raised, all in the west. Willor toured several prefectures on the frontier as well, including Enrid and Nottesan, both Iluvarian converts. Missionaries in Enrid managed to sway the locals back to Urda, and Willor himself became a blood brother

with the local Agrik. The Nottesan, however, are intransigent in their Iluvarianism.

Lord Willor, charismatic and brilliant, attracts a following wherever he goes. Over the years, he has become an iconic figure on the steppe. He's "gone native," adopting the dress and manners of a steppe Agrik. He's developed a taste for koumiss and apparently enjoys throat-singing. The steppe nomads call him *Agröes**, a Ranad word meaning "star-shining prince".

Diplomacy by the allied Lord of Branahim in Sandir went spectacularly awry. Despite the Lord's cavalry backing him up, the Sandir were unimpressed. In fact, they rather pointedly asked him to leave, and then paid tribute to Averon instead. And then there was Jorun.

The Jorun Incident (1475)

Diplomatic efforts in Jorun were led by the allied Baroness Shandri of Corinn, escorted by some 5,000 of her "close personal friends". The local magnate, Baron Ennor, was already entertaining the Averese Baron of Goorin and his 8,000 "advisors". Nevertheless, Baroness Shandri gamely made her case for her Duke. One summer night in 1475, there was an incident between a drunk member of the local mercenary contingent, the White Lotus Company, and a "close personal friend" of Baroness Shandri. One thing led to another, and pretty soon several dozen members of both parties were brawling in the streets. The Jorun army stepped in, but they proved incapable of doing anything but provoking the combatants to drawing their weapons, so Baron Ennor requested the aid of the Baron of Goorin's "advisors" to restore order.

Baroness Shandri, no fool, immediately sought to withdraw her forces from the region, lest things get well and truly out of hand. In this, she singularly failed. For several weeks, an odd sort of war was fought between first four, and then three sides, as Jorun definitively allied with Averon. The Urdans finally managed to withdraw to Ensar, pursued by elements of the White Lotus. The merce-

* Pronounced ag-ROE-esh. Or something very like it.

naries turned back before crossing the border, finding many more troops waiting for them in Ensar and coincidentally finding themselves suddenly not interested in pursuing the fight.

Are Ducal Thace and Averon at war? Both governments say no, but officers in the field have differing opinions.

THE GREAT STEPPE WAR (1469-1475)

Araxes, Electoral Thace vs. Tigers of Urda

1471: Grand Duke Tramandes of Araxes commanded the Urdan forces in Carcë. After demanding the surrender of the town at Assarnes, Tramandes was not surprised when his herald returned with a negative reply. He sent the herald back with an offer to allow the women, children, infirm, and wounded to evacuate the town unharmed. This time, the Tigers replied in the affirmative, and a small stream of old women and young children left the town under a flag of truce. They were given food, blankets, and medicine where needed, and escorted from the area.

The siege of Assarnes now began in earnest. Thacian forces threw a pair of firebolts into the town, and both sides settled down to a battle of attrition, occasional raids, and starvation.

1472: While General Jofain led his forces to reinforce the siege of Assarnes, Thacian heir Baron Brannis led his mixed force of 23,000 from Pivrassa to Rückar. They found the region entirely devoid of Tiger forces, and quickly secured the area.

Behind them in Pivrassa, Sar Gortahn was busily liberating the region and butchering the garrison. The priory of St. Nöena, recently constructed on the site of the butchery of two years before, was untouched. The Sar gave specific orders that the nuns were not to be harmed; indeed they and all Urdan missionaries in the Tigers' lands were to be treated with all due respect and reverence, even if their aims were to be thwarted.

Punchalam Orta, the Count of Pabanhipa, and an Araxean ally, took to the steppe with a force of 16,500 cavaliers and 5,000 auxiliaries. He forced

tribute from the Brandöe horseclans with nary a casualty.

Meanwhile, the siege of Assarnes continued. When Thacian General Jofain arrived with nearly 20,000 fresh troops and 90 airships, the siege entered a new, more violent phase. There was no relief forthcoming for the Tigers trapped within the town.

1473: While Assarnes was being ground down by the Urdans, Sar Gortahn was gathering what cavalry he still had available to him. Unfortunately for the Thacians, the designated rendezvous point was in Rückar. The Sar and six Agriks, including a military genius named Tahnik, with 42,000 horsemen attacked the Thacians with little warning or mercy.

Battle of the Painted Fields (1473)

The Thacians were at camp when the enemy struck. Their pickets were killed silently, one by one, and before they knew the enemy was near, they were nearly upon them. Baron Brannis cast a firebolt to give his men time to form up and put together some sort of defense. The heavy footmen formed a line while the cavalry found their horses.

It was in vain. Agrik Tahnik barked orders, and horsemen wheeled through the camp, isolating and slowly whittling the Thacian forces down. All the while, Sar Gortahn surveyed the scene from the top of a nearby hill. As his soldiers were cut down around him, Baron Brannis spurred his horse. Not for the charging enemy, but for Sar Gortahn.

The Sar was incredulous, but he cradled his lance and charged the enemy leader. In a hollow halfway up the hill, the two leaders crashed together, horse to horse, lance to lance. It was the Sar who fell to earth and did not move. If he'd hope to break the Tigers by killing their leader, Brannis failed; he was swarmed by the enemy and cut to pieces.

None of the Thacians survived.

News that Brannis had been elevated to Count Palatine and Elector of Thace did not reach him before his death.

Count Otta's cavaliers, meanwhile, forced tribute from the Tishark horseclans.

1474: News of their victory in Rückar spread throughout the steppe, galvanizing the Tigers, but this news was tempered by tidings from Assarnes. For in the spring, it began to be obvious that the defenders in the besieged town were no longer returning the besiegers' fire. The view from the air proved inconclusive, so Grand Duke Tramandes sent in a company of archers to scout out the situation. They returned, pale and shaken.

The remaining defenders, long out of food and supplies, had committed ritual suicide rather than surrender. The Grand Duke and the Thacian leaders led a small party into the ruins to see for themselves. What they saw sickened them. Saurians of all ages and both sexes had cut their own throats and lay where they had fallen. The Agrik had fallen on his own sword, clutching a message calling the Tiger horseclans to holy war.

Indeed, the threat of holy war loomed over the steppe. Only the confusion surrounding the death of Sar Gortahn had given the clans pause. The situation was complicated by the presence of countless orthodox Urdan missionaries throughout the steppe. No Tiger region was unvisited, and except in Carcë, Zaculo, Tishark, and non-aligned Islargyn, all of the Tiger regions had denounced their heretical ways.

Count Otta's army, meanwhile, forced tribute from the Moruna horseclans. The Tishark Tigers behind him renounced their tribute.

1475: Count Otta's army forced tribute from Zayana, completing his push to the cathedral of Our Lady of the Desert in Eremeth.

The horseclans in Rückar chose the academy-educated Agrik Tahnik as their new Sar. He has sent a message, under a flag of truce, to the Urdan forces in Carcë asking for terms. Holy war or peace? The steppe remains on a razor's edge, pending their reply, but the Tiger holy site of Tiogar Abbey in Carcë remains curiously undisturbed.

ELECTORAL COUNTY-PALATINE OF THACE (20 S/UR)
His Most Excellent Majesty, Ebalondrir IV, Lord Goshikka-Snamarthis, Electoral Count Palatine in Thace.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Atuburrk, Averno,
Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrägec,
Ingazi, Kicitchat, Taneki, ThaceD,
Urdrahahn

DP: None

Basodir again ordered the construction of nine priories, each of these named after an Urdan saint, including one dedicated to Nöena the Physician, founder of the Nöenian Order, in Pivrassa.

The religious revival continued throughout the realm, and indeed throughout the Urdan west. The Theology Department at the University of Snamarthis has a waiting list, and the monastic revival is seeping into every facet of popular culture.

Basodir suffered a heart attack in 1473, having never sired any children, and his cousin became Brannis V. Sadly, Brannis died on the battlefield in Rückar within the month, never having known of his elevation to the throne. As news of the Rückar catastrophe filtered back to Snamarthis, the capital was thrown into a dark state of dread, for the only heir in the female line, Lord Bannad the Lithe, had himself died the previous winter. Against all custom, the late Count Brannis' widow, the Countess Gudille, put forward her own son as a candidate to succeed his father. Many predicted a repeat of the *Thacian Succession Crisis of 1167*, but in fact there was simply no other viable candidate. In 1474, the nineteen year-old Lord Ebalondrir, unmarried and a recent graduate of the Military Academy at Esenthis, was crowned Count Palatine and Elector of Thace.

Once again the government was expanded, and a road was constructed from Jannas to Galluch.

THE TIGERS OF URDA (0 S/TU/UR)
Sar Tahnik, Master of the Horseclans, Scourge of Urda the Fierce.

Trade: None.

DP: None

Sar Agritahn gathered his armies and struck hard. And died. Tahnik is now Sar. May Urda have mercy on those who oppose him.

GRAND DUCHY OF ARAXES (25 W/UR)

His Grace, Pangku Tramandes the Valiant, Baron Pinyerrel, Grand Duke of All Araxes.

Sir Ronnel Rannes, Lord Protector of the Realm.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Averon,
Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, CM, Einandhu,
Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, Kicitchat,
Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tokatl,
Urdraháhn

DP: Thunta (F), Morna (F), Eremeth (T),
Anor (F)

Three new priories were built, including one in Thangkar built especially for the Nöenian Order. Vast public works projects were undertaken, especially in and around the capital of Pinyerrel. A new road was constructed, from Thudu, through Yibthúdu (and Pinyerrel), and into Molanh.

Intellectual and artistic life in Araxes flourished, and there are growing demands for the establishment of a proper university. A series of scholarships was endowed, and attendance at the Nigata Naval Academy exploded.

In 1473 the bulk of the Araxean cavaliers—the heroes of the Battle of Tíogar—returned at last to Pinyerrel. At their head was the Lord General of Araxes, Sir Sakkar Goethe. Many in the city were shocked at how few cavaliers remained, and how many of them bore scars. The General bore a sealed packet for the Speaker of Parliament, and a sealed envelope for the Grand Duchess and her son.

The Heros of Tíogar were treated to a lavish parade, followed by a three-day long national holiday. A grand tourney was held in their honour the following month. No expense was spared, and it promises to become the highlight of the tourney calendar. At the request of Grand Duke Tramandes, the tourney was a bloodless one, “for we have already shed too much blood for our honour and the glory of our realm.”

The winner was an irascible old Wenemet knight from Konaga named Sir Ronnel Rannes who won the final by being unhorsed and blud-

geoning his opponent with his helmet as he rode past. Much to Sir Rannes' surprise, the prize was a new title, that of “Lord Protector” or regent for Tramandes the Younger. Sir Rannes was somewhat dubious, but out of honour and duty to his realm he accepted the office.

The Parliament of the Cavaliers (1473)

Parliament reassembled under the guidance of the Lord Protector. With the return of the cavaliers, the hall was quite a bit more crowded than in years past. The packet from the Grand Duke was opened, revealing a sheaf of parchment. It was read aloud by the Speaker.

The top page bore the title, *A Charter for the Reform of the Grand Duke's Government in Araxes*. Following a lengthy introduction, lauding the honour and courage of the cavaliers of Araxes, it continued on with, “Article 1: The old form of the Araxean Parliament, having eclipsed in centuries past the Duke's Council, and having now become eclipsed itself, is hereby abolished...”

The hall erupted in pandemonium. Several MPs, including a handful from the Rump Parliament, walked out. When order was at last restored, mostly by virtue of a Saurian MP trumpeting until everybody else fell silent and covered their bleeding ears, the Speaker continued reading. “A new model parliament is hereby granted, with formal powers and rights as hereunder enumerated.”

This was much better. The so-called *Reform Charter of 1472* (for that was the year the Grand Duke composed it) laid out in excruciating detail over six pages of closely written script exactly how the new Parliament is to be summoned and dissolved, which nobles are members, how cavaliers are to be elected for membership, and how townsmen are to elect representative members, what exactly Parliament is to control, how it is to pass acts and grant charters, and over which courts it does and does not have jurisdiction. In addition, the Charter makes mention of the erection of a Ducal High Court, though the details are left rather vague.

Following the reading, Parliament went into recess for a week. When the Lord Protector re-

convened the body, the only order of business was a bill calling for elections, to take place within six months. This was duly passed, and Parliament voted for its dissolution on November 9, 1473.

The Election of 1474

According to the Charter, Parliament is to consist of all the higher aristocrats and clergy of the realm: the Counts and Barons of Araxes, the Patriarchs, Abbesses, and Prioresses of the Church; as well as two elected Cavaliers from each prefecture, and two elected Burgesses from each chartered town (Pinyerrel, Kayew, Koadhe, and Nigata). An additional seat (with veto power) is reserved to the Grand Duke or, in his absence, to the senior most of the Pangku Clan Mothers. There are, therefore, 45(ish) permanent noble seats and 21 permanent clergy seats. Some 36 rural and 8 urban seats were up for election.

Competition for the 44 open seats was fierce. The great Clans of Pangku, Puchalam, Puntha, and Thiuli, as well as the T'chaix Hive, all sponsored candidates, as did assorted parties of cavaliers and guilds. It was a chaotic shouting match on par with any Cappargarnian "election", with a great deal more civility, and a great deal less violence. The major issues were all related to the horribly cold weather and crop failures that affected the southern portions of the Grand Duchy.

The date for the election was set for 9 Tertilis, 1474. As nobody had run an election quite like this before, there were some problems with dates and procedures, and five months after the official election date, returns continued to trickle in.

The New Model Parliament (1474-1475)

The Lord Protector called Parliament to order on 9 November, exactly a year after the previous Parliament dissolved. He appointed a certain Saurian cavalier (and ex-MP) as Speaker, with no vote but a large mace and the authority to impose order if things got out of hand.

The first act of the New Model Parliament was to declare *Parliament Day*, a new annual holiday. On this day no kindred is to work. Parliament was

closed during the holiday out of respect to their duty as the "protector of liberties and not enforcer of dictats".

Two other acts were passed: *The Regency Act (1474)* made the office of Lord Protector permanent and regulated his duties, and *The Religious Protections Act (1475)* declared that religious minorities within Araxes are protected by law from persecution and prosecution for their beliefs.

The government expanded. Good thing, that.

COUNTY OF KICITCHAT (18 1/YG)

Her Excellency, Xant'ki IX, Lady Tchac'at, Countess of the Kicitchat Hive and Associated Dominions.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, Kommolek, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdrahahn

DP: None

The Countess died, as did many others, during a particularly harsh winter storm in 1474. Hive forts were strategically built, and the County was mobilized to stop any Tarotist missionaries.

Infantry quality improved, and Kicitchat now has arguably the best infantry in Sahûl. In the deep western wastes of Nertik, many strange shambling shapes were seen, er, shambling.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF ATUBURRK (20 W/YG)
His Gracious Majesty, Adhanggar Challik III, Count of Odol, Elector & Grand Duke of Atuburrk, Imperial Governor of Ardebon.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, Kicitchat, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdrahahn

DP: Egurundharr (F)

In the spring of 1472, the Armada began unloading troops onto the Wild Coast. While the local brigands attempted to deal with an army of cavaliers and cavalry led by Atuburrk's new heir, Count Dranthes, the Pirate haven of Punchedga attempted to deal with a pair of firebolts that tore several large holes in the sea walls. This was immediately followed by the landing of marines; many, many marines. Within hours the city was over-

run, and the region followed soon after. Visitors to Punchega were treated for several months to the sight of pirates hanging from the walls of the city, some in cages, some by their necks.

The Imperial Blue Fleet arrived in 1474, docking in Punchega. Vice-Admiral Tiribissi Enya called upon Count Dranthes for a short visit, and then the fleet sailed away and back to Zadres.

Five priories were built to celebrate the victory against the pirates, and the towns of the realm grew into cities. The Naval Academy was expanded.

Central Sahûl

THE HEART OF EMPIRE

ELECTORAL REPUBLIC OF CAPPARGARNIA (26 M/TA)
His Sublime Majesty, Steene Dronex II, Electoral Prince of Cappargarnia.

His Great Holiness, Carberic VI, the Obscure, Pontiff of the Hidden Lords at Golluz.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, Kicitchat, Kommolek, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Zadres (2)

DP: Failed!

Winter came to Cappargarnia, and during the horrible "Year without a Summer" of 1474, Prince Sevas Rand "the Concise" died on the kalends of Quintilis. On that fateful day, a rain of widemouth bass fell upon the city, freezing as they lay in the snow. Though many considered it a good omen, as crop failures had led to starvation, they thought it less good once the uneaten fish began to rot in the streets. The election was waged against this background of a diet consisting mostly of salted fish, while the smell of rotting seafood hung in the air.

With House Anabrin continuing to support House Steene, the Tiribissi candidate safely out of the country with the Blue Fleet, and the other factions split between a score of lesser candidates, the election was fairly well a forgone conclusion. Still, Steene Dronex was taking no chances. Banners with his heraldic badge hung all over the City.

His agents and supporters gave speeches from platforms erected in every plaza. Tiribissi party rallies were broken up by armed thugs in best Cappargarnian tradition. Scurrilous broadsheets circulated with the most vile rumours about the realities of life in Tiribissi Enya's navy.

The one really proper election riot occurred when Vice-Admiral Tiribissi's cousin, Naval Captain Tiribissi Taric, led clan supporters and some members of his crew to storm the offices of the printer who was responsible for the broadsheets.

The Collegium was seated through the cold December of 1474. When they emerged from their seclusion they announced, to no one's great surprise, the election of Steene Dronex as Prince.

The new Prince got right to work, approving a stalled road project linking the City with Tanji. The government continues to expand, and Cappargarnia's cavalry and infantry forces improved.

In matters Pontifical, Carberic commended the Count of Runazar on his strong support of the oppressed Tarotists of Shuden, and pronounced the blessings of the Hidden Lords upon those endeavours. The Church attempted to build a priory in Adndari Jarvaël. Unfortunately, the region already has a lovely priory named Tandahr after its founder and dedicated to Card o. The Prior invited the visitors from Golluz to tea and then thoroughly fleeced them for a donation to the Annual Appeal. In Syghor, decades of Tarotist mission work finally paid off with the conversion of most of the population from filthy Urdanism.

IMPERIAL FREE CITY OF ADNDAR (17 M/TA)
His Excellency Tiribissi Lanharnes, Guildmaster of the Innkeepers, Chancellor of the Guilds Council, and Hereditary Burgrave of Adndar.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, IOC, Kicitchat, Kommolek, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdrahahn

DP: None

The Guilds Council considered an offer by the Pontiff at Golluz to build a new Priory. A young prelate from the Guild of the Righteous was



particularly convincing in the heated discussion, pointing out that it would require the razing of a perfectly good Priory already there. A group of journeymen from the Merchants' Guild were also passionately vocal, growing moreso as the conversation went deep into the night.

Adndar began constructing a world-class dueling ground, and bidding for the naming rights has already begun.

IMPERIAL FREE CITY OF EINANDHU (4 M/UR)

Sir Graxes Aratan, the Tiger King of Arms.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Duedhyn, Elphárec, Golmath, IOC, Kicitchat, Tiryowglas

DP: Not Applicable

The Ancient and Undaunted Order of Heralds received a new Tiger King of Arms following the demise of the previous officeholder. After considerable planning, they established a bank for the good of the Empire.

THE IMPERIAL DEMENSE

His August & Imperial Majesty, Deric I, Baron of Wanumarra, Electoral King of Aradéc, Sovereign of Sahûl, Lord of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Emperor of All the World.

His Excellency, Count Sarrik II, Baron Kwilkyn, Count of Tiryowglas, Defender of the Faith, Chancellor of the Empire.

Imperial Influence Points: 26

For trade, see Aradéc. For appointments, see Gazette.

The Emperor appointed Count Sarrik II of Tiryowglas to his father's post as Chancellor of the Empire.

During one of the few warm days of the summer of 1475, the imperial household held a small garden party at the request of the emperor. While Deric was deep in conversation with the Itaxik ambassador, a hooded Saurian leapt from the bushes and plunged a long, thin dagger into the emperor's upper back. The blade struck the right shoulder blade, and did not penetrate far. Before he could land a second blow, the assailant was swarmed by members of the Emerald Watch, and taken down.

The 63 year-old Emperor suffered a single puncture wound to his right shoulder, which soon festered. The court doctors attending the emperor were clearly worried that poison was involved, and at least one opined that the tip of the blade had broken off in the emperor's shoulder blade. An examination of the would-be assassin's blade revealed that the tip was intact. Nevertheless, Deric suffered horrible fevers for weeks, and he has lost use of

his now withered right arm. The emperor remains bedridden most days.

The would-be assassin was captured alive, but he didn't remain that way for long. Refusing to speak, he was jailed in the palace dungeons pending an inquiry. The next day when the jailer brought him food, the prisoner was found dead in the cell, apparently the victim of self-poisoning. An examination found no identifying marks in his clothing, though his body was heavily scarred. The only unusual items were the assailant's two daggers, which were of an ancient and obsolete design.

The new Chancellor's children continued to rotate through the Imperial Page corps. In 1471, Sarrik left only to be replaced by his youngest brother Lefans. Daughter Diwskovlas graduated from the program in 1473 leaving only Lefans the youngest.

PRINCIPALITY OF DUEDHYN (10 S/RA)

His Highness, Prince Tewas III of Duedhyn, Baron Dhanos, Hereditary Marshal of the Order of the Sacred Raven.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Cappargarnia, Einandhu,

Elphárec, IOC, Kicitchat, Tiryouglas,

DP: Edhen (F), Garowdyr (F, but see below)

In the midst of some of the harshest winters on record, Duedhyn built two new priories and the charming riverside hill town of Rysworhi in Breselek. As one of the most devout peoples in Sahûl, it was with some exasperation that they shooed the latest crop of clueless Tarotist missionaries from Bufalein and Tewynn.

The brilliant diplomat, Lord Kewsel continued his good work in the Agnid Mountains, amongst people now suffering from starvation. He had finally convinced the Baron of Garowdyr to join the Principality, when a Kommolek army came gasping over the mountains. Just as quickly as the Baron's army gathered, they were dispersed with a firebolt, which killed more than half of them including the Baron himself. The Kommolek commander, Sir Skavek, demanded tribute of the Garowdyri. They were in no position to refuse.

And just like that, Duedhyn and Kommolek are at war again. All trade between the two realms

ceased, and a rumble has gone through the countryside that perhaps the time has come to deal with the Yagnarists once and for all. People in the streets are preaching holy war, and the call is slowly spreading throughout the realm. One ragged preacher in particular taught in the streets of Pareis that the Raven lives for war, and that any attack must be met with fire and steel. The Prince seemed to welcome these agitations, though no actual declaration was forthcoming.

The Principality's siege quality improved. Good thing, too, what with all those fortresses. The Sorcery Academy was expanded.

BARONY OF FELL KOMMOLEK (20 W&S/YG)

Baron Goesek Terthynn of Kommolek, Lord Treskaw, Burgrave of Fair Belsûnd.

Trade: Aradéc, Kicitchat, Hyrárec, Zarkhandu

DP: Húdûl (F), Marneeth (T), Resek (F)

Deep rumblings from slumbering Namrades sent goats scattering down the mountain sides. The harsh winters got harsher. During the horrible "Year without a Summer" of 1474, crop failures led to famine throughout the south. The new colony at Namdynn was hard hit, though the colonists gamely struggle on. In Uernos, the last rearguard keeps were abandoned to Winter.

Meanwhile, the dashing and talented Baron Terthynn carefully moved his scattered chessmen across mountain and steppe. In both diplomacy and combat, Fell Kommolek recorded success, though there are those who suspect that perhaps the Baron did not intend to invade Duedhyn...

The Baron's twin sons Annavas and Andel came of age. Annavas has proven himself the same calibre of military genius as his father. Andel, on the other hand, takes more after his sorcerous mother.

COUNTY OF TIRYOWGLAS (15 S&W/IL)

Lord Kwilkyn Kerens, Regent of Tiryouglas.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Cappargarnia, Duedhyn,

Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrárec,

Ingazi, IOC, Murali

DP: Nin (F), Tamris (F), Antedon (A),

Sennow (T)

Tiryowglas built three priories in the snow and expanded their river navy to protect trade on the Upper Antean from the constant threat of piracy. Of course, the river was frozen for much of 1474, and the pirates stayed away, so the little fleet went to aid anti-piracy measures in the Bay of Ebalon.

A Papal army of about 6,000 knights rode through the north, following the road as far as Bodrahahn before sojourning into the forests of Nin. There was some momentary confusion as Tiryowglas' military attempted to formulate a response to this "invasion", but in the end they decided that it must be some sort of goodwill tour, and they left them alone.

The Count's oldest child, the Lady Dulaga, returned from her schooling in Sistrameides to the Regent's court, where her beauty and charm have turned not a few heads. His second daughter Tesenn, by contrast, entered the Church and is now a nun at the Cathedral of Orodreth in Umaseth. Young Lord Sarrik, the Count's second son, has returned as a junior governmental advisor to his brother the Regent. Tiryowglas experienced a bit of bump in the workforce, as many of the baby boomers came of age.

Four volcanic eruptions were noted in Tamris.

ILUVARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (22 IL)

His All Holiness, Pope Sanguine XIV, Pontiff of Sistrameides, Archemandrite of Ilúhir.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Elphárec, Hyrágec, Tiryowglas

DP: Failed

Pope Benevolent XI went on a long journey to see if he could speak with the Wrym Fribæld. He did not return. His successor was chosen in 1475. Many new public works projects were undertaken in Ogodhan, giving the Church state the highest standard of living of any realm in Sahúl.

MOST SANGUINE DUCHY OF ELPHÁREC (26 W/IL)

His Grace, Eparreb Caranthes IV, the Pious, Count of Angûron and Siddhan, Duke of Elphárec.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Cappargarnia, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Hyrágec, Ingazi, IOC, Tiryowglas

DP: Neri (F)

Despite massive investments, particularly in the University of Epadh, nothing really improved. Ebléc in Lanúl expanded into a city, and the town of Port Kronoth was built in Grimás. The new Baron of Mungg began his studies at the University. Oddly, he doesn't appear interested in mining.

In 1472 a peculiar lightning storm, centered above the capital city of Epadh, appeared out of nowhere. Repeated lightning strikes on the grounds of a small nondescript house culminated in a long, rolling sound as if the Gates of Heaven itself were opening. Then there was silence for a moment, followed a voice that sounded like a tolling bell, loud and clear: "I am the Deva Iuril of the Court of Iluvar. What is your will?"

KINGDOM OF HYRÁGEC (20 W/UR)

Her Valiant Majesty Irrjir Sardira, the Virgin Queen, Reigning Queen of Hyrágec, Beloved of Urda.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Aruburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Elphárec, Golmath, Ingazi, IOC, Kicitchat, ThaceD, ThaceE, Urdrahahn

DP: None

Queen Sardira, now gloriously reigning, endowed many new public works projects for her people in every region of her realm. She invested heavily in her military, particularly her navy and her naval academy, which both improved.

The weather was a great deal colder than normal, and crop failures, particularly in 1474, were a hardship. Still, it got warmer the next year.

The Irrjir Clan Mothers convened to determine an heir from amongst the Queen's several cousins. They chose a gruff but clever youth named Rahnes, who is the son of the Queen's cousin Lady Andjit. The Queen was delighted with their choice and invested the boy as Prince and heir.

Prince Rahnes was immediately dispatched to the Naval Academy at Aybon, where he did extremely well.

The Gawan Peninsula

THE FEUDAL NORTHEAST

COUNTY PALATINE OF INGAZI (21 W/UR)

His Most Urdan Excellency, Gwariva Razhim IX, the Competent, Overlord of Gawan, Captain of the East Riding, Count Palatine of Ingazi.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Chi'tixi, Hyrágec, Kicitchat, Murali, Murrugapa, Runazar, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, (z)Arkhandu

DP: Payirri (A), Gawanyi (T), Withiwandi (A)

Ingazi discovered to their amazement that two of their cities were larger than previously thought. Just to be sure, they went ahead and expanded Madramityi anyway. Thanks to wise investments, cavalry and naval quality improved, and all three of Ingazi's academies grew.

As in much of central Sahûl, the snowy summer of 1474 caused hardship and suffering.

Hundreds of Iluvarian missionaries went door-to-door in Sonnow. The Ingazi were ready for them. The missionaries were all captured, stripped naked, painted blue, and dumped into the Ogobir River. Several drowned, including one old Saurian who had originally arrived in a very fancy hat.

The Red Dragon Company continued to patrol the Golmathi border, looking for incursions. There still aren't any.

CHURCH UNIVERSAL & TRIUMPHANT (43.5 UR)

Her All-Holiness Ardonia XIV, Claw of the Dragon, First Matriarch of Urda, Protector of Sahûl.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, Kicitchat, ThaceD, ThaceE

DP: None

First Matriarch Ardonia finally had enough of these meddlesome Tarotist missionaries. Shuden was overrun with nuns. Healing nuns, teaching nuns, soup kitchen nuns, preaching nuns, nuns with hats and nuns with books, nuns with bats and nuns with dirty looks. And airships. Lots and lots of airships. The Cathedral of Harlech became

a focus for some of the most intense missionary work undertaken in recent history. Homegrown Tarotists were allowed to worship in peace, though most of them reverted back to Urdanism. The large number of Tarotist missionaries that were found there, however, were a different story. Taking a cue from Ingazi, the Matriarch decreed that they be stripped naked, painted blue, and dropped into the Antean River. And so it was done. Of course, even if they hadn't been painted, they would have been blue enough after exposure to the frigid water.

And then Runazar invaded Shuden. Duich Rahkkus Ta and his 12,000 infantry attacked in 1472, beginning their campaign with a lightning bolt aimed squarely at the Cathedral of Harlech. The Cathedral was significantly damaged, but the locals were galvanized. With the active support of the Matriarch's airfleet, the army of the doughty old Lord of Shuden fought the invaders to a standstill. The Duich called for reinforcements, but the Regent, Lord Draktich Re, did not heed the call. Unfolding events in Runazar had demanded his attention, and he abandoned the once mighty Clan Duich to their fate. Expecting help and receiving none, Duich and his army were demolished.

Roodreis was expanded, and many investments were made to little effect. Once again, Mount Pupini erupted every year.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF GOLMATH (22 W/TA)
His Gracious Majesty, Walarri Sardhan III, the Glorious, Baron of Madran and Kamadhi, Count of Agdora, Imperial Governor of Kaparis, and Elector & Grand Duke of Golmath.

His Great Holiness, Mordican I, Hierarch of the Fellowship of Connate Tarotists and Pontiff of the Hidden Lords at Serri.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Hyrágec, Kicitchat, Murali, Sidith (2), ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, Zarkhandu

DP: Makuwali (F), Dimbiyi (A)

The wildly popular Grand Duke Sardhan the Glorious continued to lead his mighty realm into a religious and cultural renaissance. Nydoon and

Thunarr expanded, a port was built in Kama-dhi on the Yali River, and the new port town of Elam was built in Pirayi for the Pontiff. Roads were built from Warraki to Kalikadra, and from Madran to Pirayi.

Into the teeth of Winter, Commodore Maazin's fleet was dispatched to the far south. They braved the icy seas to anchor at last in the frozen port of ancient Brukos in Lautro. Some 5000 Wenemet were put ashore to plunder the ruins. Many did not survive.

Numerous mendicants wandered through the Grand Duchy, including a popular barefoot healer named Distahn, who preached something he called "the Way of the Fool". Theological discourse is rapidly becoming something of a national sport, although a growing divide is evident between those who advocate Tarotist pluralism and those who advocate a strict, almost fanatical purity. The latter are held responsible for a growing tide of petty and casual violence against the Yagnarist and Iluvarian minorities.

ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ARADÉC (33+II W/IL)
His Majesty, Prince Sansollen Dirharn, Prince-Regent of Aradéc.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Kicitchat, Hyrágec, Ingazi, IOC, Kommolek, Murali, Murrugapa, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

DP: Wanangi (T possibly)

Diplomatic efforts on the baboon-infested isle of Wanangi concluded with the natives giving Aradéc's ambassadors some yams and a pretty stick. The ambassadors declared victory and asked if they couldn't come home now, please.

Aradéc's capital of Darnuldeis grew, but otherwise it was the military that got the most money and attention. Despite heavy investment everywhere, only the government and the Naval Academy improved at all. In 1471 a peculiar lightning storm, yadda yadda yadda at Darnuldeis, appeared out of nowhere, blah blah blah Gates of Heaven etc.: Deva Sondutek.

BARONY OF MURRUGAPA (I W/IL)

Baron arYarwain Didrel of Murrugapa.

Trade: Aradéc, Ingazi, Murali, Runazar

DP: None.

Baron Dirdel, oblivious to the untenable and precarious position of his realm, invited all of his trading partners to join him at the spring fair in his fair little town of Yandhu, where there would be feasting and revels.



THE PIRATE WAR—YO HO!

Several realms sent fleets into the campaign against the pirates: Tiryowglas sent their river squadron, and Murali dispatched Yustomon with naval and air assets. They both engaged several pirate flotillas and set them to the bottom. The Imperial Red Fleet was conspicuous by its absence.

The greatest assets in the fight were certainly the officers, sailors, and marines of the mighty Aradéc fleet of 75 caravels and 425 warships. Under the command of Sir arTirri Mathius (and his Deva friend Sondutek), they swept the Bay of Ebalon, engaging and capturing or sinking dozens of pirate vessels. By 1475, those pirates who had dared to sail the Bay were all but obliterated.

COUNTY OF MURALI (9 W/TA)

His Excellency, Kilyara Torthes I, Baron of Karrka, Count of Murali.

Trade: Aradéc, Golmath, Ingazi, Murrugapa, Sidith (2), Tiryowglas, Zarkhandu

DP: Nope.

Murali expanded its government to the point where even the folks out in the snowy forests know that it exists. Public works were built in every region. The harsh winters were rough on poor Murali, but the locals now claim that they enjoy the cold. "Polar bear" competitions are very big, and ice cream is the new national dish.

Murali missionaries used their persuasive powers to convince the Urdans of Kefádhú to give up their wild, heathenish ways.

IATHEDEK: THE PROTECTORATE OF FRIBÆLD

A merchant ship in the Lower Antean caught fire in 1471, but this was ascribed to simple incompetence rather than dragonfire.

A legion of cheerful, snappily-dressed Tarotist missionaries from Golluz entered Fribæld's protectorate, armed with tracts and glossy magazines, with the stated intention of converting the Wyrms. Gleefully they marched in, singing bouncy hymns and waving felt banners. None returned.

The Iluvarian Pontiff, Pope Benevolent XI, entered Fribæld's protectorate for a chat. Poor old Benevolent paid no attention to the "Beware the Wyrms" signs. He entered but did not exit. He is presumed dead. Frankly, he was old enough that the walk through the Wyrmwaste might have been enough to kill him.

ꝛ **Chill Zarkhu** ꝛ
IN THE SHADOW OF YARNI-ZA

COUNTY OF RUNAZAR (IS W/TA)

*His Excellency, the Volpel Zhogian the Fearless,
Baron Volpel & Count of Runazar.*

Trade: Ingazi, Murrugapa, Sidith (2), Tiryowglas,
Zarkhandu

DP: None.

The seeds of dissatisfaction with the current regime in Runazar flowered at last. Many members of Clan Volpel, angered at the strange ways and isolation of Zhotek Re and his heir Draktich Re, grew restive as more and more of the realm's government was turned over to a shadowy group known only as "the Four" or "the Hand".

Then in 1471, a young scion of the Clan, operating as an acolyte in the Cathedral of Random in Yarnith, discovered a horrible secret. Deep in the crypts of the Cathedral, he came upon a hidden chamber, previously unknown to him, which contained the mummified body of his kinsman, Count Zhotek Re. He had obviously been dead for quite some time. Years. Perhaps decades. He was laid out on an altar draped in red, and dozens of candles burned in elaborate candelabras at his head

and feet. The walls, floor, and ceiling of the room were covered in writing, tiny and closely spaced words in what appeared to be Ancient Saurian. The Count's body was clothed in rough brown robes, with a repeating pattern incongruously embroidered in delicate silver at the cuffs of the sleeves. The young acolyte soon recognized the pattern as repeating numbers: 10, 13, 16, 20, 10, 13, 16...

He fled.

Within months, the dissidents of Clan Volpel had united under the leadership of a kilted maniac named Zhogian. Carefully, he sent out feelers to the dissidents in the other major clans and to Tarotist clerics not associated with the Hand. In the summer of 1473, they struck.

The Hand, of course, had anticipated their every move. Many of the dissident clan leaders were found dead in their beds, and the leaders of the orthodox clergy had simply... vanished.

What the Hand had failed to take into account, however, was the stubborn and bloody-minded independence that the Runazar Clans cherished, as well as a certain kilted maniac. As one, the clan armies rose against Draktich Re and the Hand.

Tributary Shékon simply rebelled, and the island garrisons all declared for the Clans. In mainland Runazar, however, it was a more complicated affair. Since there were Hand fortresses in virtually every region, civil war was fought in virtually every region. Draktich Re, his army stranded in Inzana, called upon the Red Fleet to transport them. The fleet captains, enraged that they'd been receiving orders from a dead man for who knows how long, did not comply and reverted to Imperial command. Abandoning his army, Draktich Re returned to Vess by packet boat at night to rally the forces loyal to him.

The regions of Harrahk and Rhuzan were convulsed as the clans of Duich and Harret fought to regain their ancient clan castles. Zadok, where the town of Bratarak had grown into a city, was the scene of vicious fighting as the Hand forces, controlling both the priory of Ruulk Tor and the fortress of Rhetan, fought off wave after wave of clan swordsmen. In Zahn, Zhogian's forces were

able to take his own clan fortress of ArVolpel from the inside, as loyal retainers and clan members rose up against the regime of Draktich Re.

As the winter of 1473 fell, Zhogian's Clan forces were in control of most of the county, except for the Hand strongholds of Slith, Vess, and Yarnith, and Inzana (occupied by Draktich Re's army) and Harrahk and Zadok (still fighting internal civil wars). Most fighting was suspended for the harsh winter, giving each side time to marshal their forces. The winter, however, did not end.

By what should have been the summer of 1474, with feet of snow on the ground and more coming, Draktich Re felt he could wait no longer.

The Battle of Vortith Burn (1474)

The decisive engagement was fought in Vess along the frozen banks of a small creek called Vortith Burn. The armies met in the midst of a sudden, driving summer snowstorm. Supported by 15,000 foot from Clan Harret, Zhogian had marshalled a total 37,000 Wenemet. The Hand, by contrast, had 12,000 supported by 25 airships.

Zhogian rode to the front of the assembled clans and roused his supporters with a fine speech, exhorting them to fight for their honour and freedom, and the honour and freedom of Runazar. He himself led the forward charge. Draktich Re, by contrast, fired off a lightning bolt and directed his forces from his command airship. The airships were a huge help, but ultimately they couldn't stop Zhogian and the Clans.

In the midst of swirling battle, Draktich Re's airship was brought down by ballista fire. Amid the wreckage and blinding snow, he found himself face to face with his cousin and enemy, Zhogian. Swords drawn, they fell upon each other without scruple or mercy. Volpel Zhogian emerged from the wrecked airship, his fur matted with blood both his and his enemy's. The combatants paused, and he wordlessly hurled Draktich Re's severed head into the enemy ranks. They broke and ran, and the Clans pursued them and slaughtered them all.

The city of Iannib surrendered without a fight, and a revolt by the lower clergy in Random over-

threw the hold of Hand in Yarnith. In the confusion, many of the Hand operatives escaped, and the mummified body of the late Count Zhotek Re was nowhere to be found. The orthodox clergy there elected the most pious (and untainted) priest they could find as the new Patriarch of Random. One by one the Hand's supporters fled the country or holed up in their final stronghold: Slith.

When the snow finally melted in 1475, the Hand had been purged from Runazar. Only Slith and Inzana remained apart from the County. On the fifth of Quadrilis, Zhogian was formally invested by the Clans as Count of Runazar.

ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ZARKHANDU (39 S/YG)
His Great & Terrible Majesty, Onin Zhur, Lord Sakkath, Count of Vúhlath & Mlideen, Duke of Hyáglion, Imperial Governor of Kanapad, Thebia, & Yann, Electoral King of Zarkhandu.

Trade: Golmath, Ingazi, Kommolek, Murali,
Runazar, Sidith (2), Slith (4)

DP: Agremek (T)

King Onin Zhur, loud and boisterous in his correspondence, nevertheless continued the careful development of his realm. A priory was built, and two port areas were raised, in Zîman-Dath and Khamazan. The south was full of shambling, as the zillions of zombies were shuffled into corrals and patted down for contraband.

The icy weather was particularly difficult in Zarkhandu, and many thousands perished of exposure and famine, as crops failed and the land was covered with snow. The trickle of refugees from the north has somewhat dried up as a result.

Prince Sharret, Princess Kwadan and their two sons made the pilgrimage to Yarni-Za.

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IMPERIAL GAZETTE

Published by the Ancient and Undaunted Order of Heralds by Appointment to His Imperial Majesty



APPOINTMENTS

To Chancellor of the Empire: Count Kwilkyn Sarrik of Tiryowglas.

To Admiral of the Green: Electoral Grand Duchess Jera III of Averon.

To Governor of Dranmul: Electoral Grand Duchess Jera III of Averon.

To Governor of Drazan, Iantier, Kinsidan, Muralis, Nauatidran, Sachon, Withidan: *by exam.*

OPEN OFFICES

Due to death or incapacitation of the previous office-holders, the following are now vacant:

PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS OF THE EMPIRE

<i>Province</i>	<i>Governor</i>	<i>Province</i>	<i>Governor</i>
Agador	bureaucrat	Kembul	bureaucrat
Anabreis	bureaucrat	Kiermon	bureaucrat
Aradaun	bureaucrat	Kinsidan	bureaucrat
Arador	bureaucrat	Kordier	bureaucrat
Ardebon	Atuburrk	Kumarand	bureaucrat
Artier	vacant	Lambris	vacant
Balashan	bureaucrat	Larloc	bureaucrat
Belegarid.	vacant	Mondahan	vacant
Biralis	bureaucrat	Muralis	bureaucrat
Chos	Itaxik	Narchoal	bureaucrat
Dorthacia	vacant	Nauatidran	vacant
Dranchoal	bureaucrat	Orinos	bureaucrat
Dranmul	Averon	Sachon	bureaucrat
Drazhan	bureaucrat	Sardior	bureaucrat
Endior	bureaucrat	Sistramidor	bureaucrat
Iantier	bureaucrat	Tepalis	bureaucrat
Iasedior	bureaucrat	ThaciaMaior	vacant
Kaidu	bureaucrat	ThaciaMinor	vacant
Kanapad	Zarkhan.	Thebia	Zarkhan.
Kanmul	bureaucrat	Tramelis	vacant
Kaparis	Golmath	Withidan	bureaucrat
Kassaria	bureaucrat	Yann	Zarkhan.
Kastier	bureaucrat		

Marshal of Thacia, Admiral of the Blue, Admiral of the Red, and governors as indicated.

IMPERIAL STRENGTH INDEX

#	Realm	Player	Forum Name	E-mail	ISI
<i>The Great Powers</i>					
1	Aradéc / Emperor ...	Charles Hurst	Xanthi.....	charlesh@teleport.com	1,352.2
2	Averon	Kevin Lawrence	Averon Inc.....	privatej67@yahoo.com	961.5
3	Cappargarnia	David Adams	seattleda	seattleda@yahoo.com	900.6
4	Araxes.....	Darren Quinn	Demantiae.....	demantiae@gmail.com	821.8
5	Chitixi.....	Steve Cagg	Priest King.....	ragnarstation@hotmail.com.....	812.2
<i>Major Powers</i>					
6	Thace, Elector	Nuno da Silva	Nuno	ndasilva23@hotmail.com	780.1
7	Golmath	Paul Flinton	Free Beer	cruentidei@gmail.com.....	751.2
8	Church U&T	Jacqueline Brasfield	Amphigori.....	crabbycupcakes@gmail.com	736.5
9	Zarkhandu.....	Theo Moriarty	Mandala of Blood.....	tmoriarty@gmail.com	702.1
10	Atuburrk	Ian Andrews.....	Seneschal	in.carcosa@gmail.com	696.5
11	Itaxik	Michael Warner.....	Galen.....	me1451@comcast.net	685.8
12	Duedhyn	Alex James.....	Clan Dhanos of Duedyn	ClanDhanos@yahoo.com	650.4
13	Elphárec.....	Josh Buchanan	joshb.....	joshinstl@yahoo.com	598.3
14	Pexiki	John Schmid	Magus	magus@spellcaster.org.....	581.2
15	Taneki	Ed Allen.....	Malathion	tgroove@earthlink.net.....	575.6
<i>Minor Powers</i>					
16	Kicitchat	James Hazeltine.....	Von Malvalken.....	jhazeltine@pleiadesmm.com	570.8
17	Ingazi	Harry Jago	jago	jagoh@yahoo.com.....	569.2
18	Adndar.....	Steven Lloyd	Blackheart.....	slloyd13@gmail.com.....	534.1
19	Tiryowglas	Mike Johnson	Minister of Defense	printermanmj@aol.com	526.2
20	Kommolek	Cortlandt Winters	Cortah	cwinters@notebookmargins.com ..	519.0
21	Hyrágec	open for a player .....	.....	.....	482.8
22	Thacé, Duchy.....	Jake Roberts	Jake	jakeroberts1@cox.net.....	475.8
23	Runazar.....	open for a player .....	.....	.....	429.5
<i>Miscellaneous Rabble</i>					
24	Church Militant	open for a player .....	.....	.....	367.1
25	IOC	Nelson Merritt	hemmy	hemmymeritt@yahoo.com	340.3
26	Tokatl.....	open for a player .....	.....	.....	324.2
27	Murali.....	Corey Snow.....	Cyclometh	cyclometh@gmail.com	320.1
28	Kachar.....	Jim ? .....	.....	dingoeseightmybaby@yahoo.com..	316.8
29	Yax'te.....	Tyler Baumgartner	rawhidekid.....	tylerbaumgartner@gmail.com	277.7
30	Sakkar.....	open for a player .....	.....	.....	252.7
31	Tigers.....	open for a sucker .....	.....	.....	198.5
32	Murrugapa.....	really? .....	.....	.....	58.7

